

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

OFFICIAL ORGAN HAPPY HOURS BROTHERHOOD

Volume One

Number Twelve

THE ENGLISH GIANT

by Ross Craufurd

Out of the vast crowd of ink-stained scribblers who toiled in Penny-Dreadful-Land during the latter half of the last century there is one who stands head and shoulders above the rest. For thirty years he produced an ever-sparkling variety of tales that were the delight of English boyhood. His name and works, with one notable exception, are probably unknown to the readers of the Round-Up. Which gives me all the more pleasure in introducing the English giant—E. HARCOURT BURRAGE.

He was the author of the celebrated "Handsome Harry," which was condensed by Frank Tousey and reprinted in *The Boys of New York*. Even in its abbreviated form, it achieved great popularity in this country.

"Tom Wildrake's Schooldays" of which he wrote the greater part, was also reprinted here in Frank Leslie's *Boy's and Girl's Weekly*. Among the host of other stories which established and confirmed his reputation in England are "The Lambs of Littlecote," "The Island School," "Tom Tartar," "Tom Torment," "Slapcrash Boys," and "Hardiboy James."

Other writers for boys equalled Burrage in plot, in incident, in action and in story telling. What then, was the quality that made him great and lifted him so far above his fellow writers? In a word, it was humor. Not so much the slapstick humor of misadventure that we find in Comic Library stories, but the humor of quaint character and original observation.

We find this humor of character at its best in Burrage's creation of Ching Ching, that bibulous being of uncer-

tain antecedents and inspired lies. Ching-Ching's yarns about his early life in China whose customs were singularly like those of England, his amazing dexterity at stealing articles with his feet, and his happy knack of luring his companions into ludicrous mishaps took the boys of England by storm. From a minor character at the beginning of "Handsome Harry" he grew to such proportions that he dominated the story. His popularity was so great that the author continued his adventures in "Cheerful Ching-Ching," "Wonderful Ching-Ching," and "Darling Ching-Ching." And then there was a series devoted to "Young Ching Ching."

Old Dabber, a character in "Tom Wildrake's Schooldays," is another of Burrage's great liars. Dabber's genius for getting into trouble, his anecdotes concerning Lord Nelson and Christopher Columbus, with both of whom he claimed to have sailed, and his weakness for the bottle all form a never-ending source of fun.

"The Lambs of Littlecote" gives us another of Burrage's immortals—Penny Bunn, the schoolmaster. An arrant coward, he manages to smile fearlessly through the most horrifying experiences because he thinks that he is merely having a nasty nightmare. Old Joss, the broken-down circus horse in "Broad Arrow Jack," is fully as human and humorous. His specialty is enacting the death of Black Bess at most inopportune moments.

While Burrage's forte was humor, he was equally at home in writing of adventure and exciting incident. In "Broad Arrow Jack," the hero acquires complete control of a new land in order to further his vengeance against the Ogre, his chief enemy. This

remarkable tale is as thrilling as it is improbable.

In "Charity Joe" and "Boyhood's Battles," we have an account of the inhuman tyrannies practised in cheap private schools that is reminiscent of Dickens' description of Dotheboys Hall in "Nicholas Nickleby."

Another evidence of Burrage's greatness is his consistency. In 1895, after a quarter-century of prolific writing, he produced two of his best works—"The Lambs of Littlecote" and "The Island School." After that length of service one could reasonably think that the fountain of his inspiration would have dwindled to a disappointing trickle.

Especially so when one considers the length of the majority of his stories. "Handsome Harry," without its sequels, runs to 300 closely printed pages. "Tom Wildrake" totals 800 pages. "The Lambs" requires 600 pages and I only wish that it were twice as long.

Nearly all of his stories originally appeared as serials in Emmett's, Fox's and Brett's publications. He also edited a journal of his own—Ching-Chings Own. Many of the serials were reprinted in penny numbers. All are eagerly sought by English collectors.

In closing, I must apologize for the sketchy nature of these random remarks. My incomplete knowledge of the subject and space forbids anything approaching a full description of the works of a most unusual writer.

FACTS ABOUT "PETER PAD"

by Ralph F. Adimare

In recent numbers of Dime Novel Round-Up appeared excerpts from the "Life of Peter Pad," supposed to be George G. Small. As a matter of fact, "Peter Pad" is not the sole name for George G. Small. Edward E. Ten Eyck wrote more stories under that name than did Small. Small was a poor humorist.

The "Life of Peter Pad" was written by Ten Eyck, as you will discover by comparing the style. In order to distinguish between Small and Ten Eyck it is necessary to read every item under the name of "Peter Pad." Three men wrote under that name, George G. Small, Edward E. Ten Eyck, and Cecil Burleigh. Ten Eyck and Small died the same year, 1886, so that every

comic story written under the name of "Peter Pad" which appeared after that year is the work of Cecil Burleigh, who died December 2, 1921.

Ten Eyck is one of the giants of dime novels, his early death a tragedy for American literature. His death was a great loss, for he remains one of the finest writers of that period. It was he who gave to us Muldoon, a figure that still remains with us in jokes, songs, and quips. He wrote practically all the "Bricktop" series wrongfully attributed to George G. Small. In comparison with him Small was "small" indeed.

He edited Boys of New York up to his early death twenty-eight years young, and was a big figure in nearly half a dozen story papers, such as Young Men of America, Arm Chair, Boys of New York, Our Boys, Harrigan & Hart's New York Boys, etc.

VOICE OF THE COLLECTOR

by Charles Bragin

I have been receiving letters of late from dime novel "collectors" complaining about the publicity which I have been giving regarding the large stocks of Beadle's publications which I have recently discovered to be still existing. The writers of these letters complain that this publicity will cause prices for Beadle items to drop.

These writers are either very short-sighted, or not real collectors but dealers. I firmly maintain that lower prices are of benefit to all collectors. It is stated that I am foolish to broadcast lower prices because it lowers the "re-sale" value of my own collection. Now, how in the world does "re-sale" value affect a genuine collector? I do not buy stuff to make a profit—to resell. Otherwise I would not be a collector, but a dealer.

A collector who collects novels and story papers he likes—and that is the only real collector—does not worry when prices go down. A book that is loved is worth the same to a collector whether it sells for ten dollars or ten cents.

A collector who complains that he cannot sell his stuff at a profit is not a collector at all—he is a dealer. A real collector will not sell his treasures at a profit when prices go up, and so does not worry when prices go down.

Lower prices will mean more activity—will enable collectors to get what they want at less cost. Items which they could not afford to buy at inflated prices will be within reach of ordinary pocketbooks. Trading will go on just the same, regardless of prices. You will swap a Beadle's Dime for a Beadle's Dime just the same. There will be more stuff in the market, and more trading, with lower prices.

I feel that I am doing the rank and file a genuine service in my efforts to bring prices down to their real values, instead of the inflated values established by a few dealers who had the big lots and could enforce their demands.

I am standing firmly by my guns in the matter, not only in words, but in deeds. I am passing items offered to me at fifty per cent below former prices because they are still too high, leaving them go to others rather than pay more than the prices I have fixed as proper.

Even for those items which I need I will not go over these prices, intending firmly to stick to my principles and to my campaign for real prices and real values.

A NOTE ON D. W. STEVENS

by Wm. L. Beck

D. W. Stevens is the author to whom has been credited a long list of James Boys novels, but his real name was John R. Musick. The first story by Stevens which I read was one of the features of the first number of Young Men of America, which appeared in September, 1877. The title of this serial was "True as Steel, or Ben Bright the Boy Engineer." It was in this paper, too, that I read the first James Boys story by Stevens, the title of which was "The James Boys, or the Bandit King's Last Shot."

For one of the early numbers of the Nickel Library Stevens wrote "Jack the Bear Man, or the Little Mountain Archer," but this story appeared under his real name, John R. Musick. Another serial under this name appeared in Frank Tousey's Arm Chair, "Witches of Wildwood." And again, under his real name, he wrote several stories for the New York Ledger in the 1890's. In one of these stories, Jesse James

appeared as The "Mysterious Mr. Howard."

Some of the stories by this gifted writer must go back to some very early publications, as I have been unable to locate the publication in which appeared "The Fairy Horseman." Another story, "The Kewanee Bank Robbery," written by Stevens, appeared in one of the early numbers of the Log Cabin Library.

Mr. S. Nathan says that Stevens also wrote under the name of John R. Coryell, but this is a matter of doubt, as I have been informed that Coryell was another writer altogether. The "John R." in the names of Musick and Coryell seem to agree, but this is not proof.

In all of his stories in the Young Men of America, and in the New York Detective Library, Musick used the name of D. W. Stevens.

When and where he was born, and what he has been doing these past few decades, I am unable to say. But I can truly say that the real name of D. W. Stevens was John R. Musick, and that he at one time was a lawyer.

JOHN J. MORONEY

Died August 4, 1931

Fearless, honest, true-blue was he
Now passed on to Eternity.
He has gone to his last bourn
We his friends can only mourn.
Dear friend, resting in your bier
On our cheek there falls a tear.
We shall miss you day by day
More than printed words can say.
May these thoughts inspire each brother
To be kindly toward each other.
Farewell, a final farewell in life,
but forever

You shall live in our kindly memories.
The Happy Hours Brotherhood

Robert H. Smeltzer, as usual, has been on the job for the Brotherhood.

It is reported that P. C. Maroske is getting active again.

Ralph P. Smith gets credit for starting more members in the hobby than any other man on the list.

With that other Ralph, our President, Ralph F. Cummings, a close second choice.

George Sahr's collection is going to

get a big write-up in our magazine soon, with others to follow.

Frank T. Fries did a good job printing our magazine for eleven months.

W. B. McCafferty certainly knows his Texas history and romance.

Charles Bragin has been taking lots of advertising space lately. Must be getting results.

George Sahr has a new home address: 2605 73rd Street, Kenosha, Wis.

A new member is welcomed to our ranks, Number 56, Charles F. Westbrook, E. 1204 Illinois Ave., Spokane, Wash.

Looks like 1932 is going to be a record breaking year for the Brotherhood in membership and activity.

Ralph F. Adimare's renewed activity is one of the best things that has happened. He is a walking encyclopedia of real information on our hobby.

It is reported that several additions to our membership are about to turn up from England, the land of Dick Turpin, the immortal Black Bess, and Jack Sheppard. Gentlemen, "stand and deliver!"

Henry Steele, 92 Knollys Road, Streatham, London, S. W. 16, England, whose article on "The Publications of Charles Fox," will appear in our next number, solicits correspondence with fellow collectors.

POPULAR AMERICAN NOVELS

Item No. 11—The 5 Cent Weekly Library. Size, 8¼ by 11 inches; two columns to page; 16 pages. Black and white. Published by Frank Tousey, 34 and 36 North Moore Street, New York, in 1883. A nickel library. Nice illustrations on front cover. One of Tousey's snappy specialties. Some of the titles: No. 1, "Old Neversleep," by Walter Fenton; No. 12, "The Drummer Boy Spy," by Ralph Morton; No. 28, "The Williams Brothers as Fugitives," by Robert Maynard; No. 46, "Infantry Dave," by Ralph Morton.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Just as we go to press with this last page of our magazine, we have received a noteworthy manuscript from William J. Benners, king-pin of the old-timers and readers, and world's

authority on serial story papers. This valuable contribution, "The Golden Age of English Boys' Literature," will be split into several instalments, and begin in our February number. It is a record and review of the boys' journals of England published during the two decades from 1862 to 1882—a digest of information which could otherwise only be obtained by years of research.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN MORONEY

Died August 4, 1931

A loyal friend, an honest fighter, fearless and upright, whose passing is mourned by all who knew him. The Brotherhood can ill-afford his loss.

May his soul rest in peace, among the shades of his favorite Dime Novel heroes.

Charles Bragin.

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